

1 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

2 DISTRICT OF NEVADA

3 Matthew Steinbach,

Case No.: 2:25-cv-00726-JAD-MDC

4 Petitioner

**Order Dismissing  
and Closing Case**

5 v.

[ECF No. 4]

6 Warden Terry Royal, *et al.*,

7 Respondents

8 *Pro se* Petitioner Matthew Steinbach filed his 28 U.S.C. § 2254 petition for writ of  
9 habeas corpus.<sup>1</sup> In May 2025, I ordered Steinbach to either pay the required \$5.00 filing fee or  
10 submit a complete application for leave to proceed *in forma pauperis* (“IFP”) by July 7, 2025.<sup>2</sup>  
11 That deadline expired, and Steinbach did not pay the fee or file a complete application to proceed  
12 *in forma pauperis*.

13 District courts have the inherent power to control their dockets and “[i]n the exercise of  
14 that power, they may impose sanctions including, where appropriate . . . dismissal” of a case.<sup>3</sup> A  
15 court may dismiss an action based on a party’s failure to obey a court order or comply with local  
16 rules.<sup>4</sup> In determining whether to dismiss an action on this ground, the court must consider:  
17 (1) the public’s interest in expeditious resolution of litigation; (2) the court’s need to manage its  
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21 <sup>1</sup> ECF No. 1-1.

<sup>2</sup> ECF No. 4.

22 <sup>3</sup> *Thompson v. Hous. Auth. of City of Los Angeles*, 782 F.2d 829, 831 (9th Cir. 1986).

23 <sup>4</sup> *Malone v. U.S. Postal Service*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987) (dismissal for failure to  
comply with court order); *Henderson v. Duncan*, 779 F.2d 1421, 1424 (9th Cir. 1986) (dismissal  
for lack of prosecution and failure to comply with local rules).

1 docket; (3) the risk of prejudice to the defendants; (4) the public policy favoring disposition of  
2 cases on their merits; and (5) the availability of less drastic alternatives.<sup>5</sup>

3 The first two factors, the public's interest in expeditiously resolving this litigation and the  
4 court's interest in managing its docket, weigh in favor of dismissal of the Steinbach's claims.  
5 The third factor, risk of prejudice to defendants, also weighs in favor of dismissal because a  
6 presumption of injury arises from the occurrence of unreasonable delay in prosecuting an  
7 action.<sup>6</sup> The fourth factor—the public policy favoring disposition of cases on their merits—is  
8 greatly outweighed by the factors favoring dismissal.

9 The fifth factor requires the court to consider whether less drastic alternatives can be used  
10 to correct the party's failure that brought about the court's need to consider dismissal.<sup>7</sup> Courts  
11 “need not exhaust every sanction short of dismissal before finally dismissing a case, but must  
12 explore possible and meaningful alternatives.”<sup>8</sup> Because this court cannot operate without  
13 collecting reasonable fees, and litigation cannot progress without compliance with court orders,  
14 the only alternative is to enter a second order setting another deadline. But issuing a second  
15 order will only delay the inevitable and further squander the court's finite resources. Setting  
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18 <sup>5</sup> *In re Phenylpropanolamine Prod. Liab. Litig.*, 460 F.3d 1217, 1226 (9th Cir. 2006) (quoting  
19 *Malone*, 833 F.2d at 130).

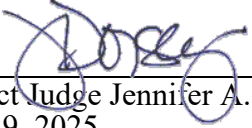
20 <sup>6</sup> *See Anderson v. Air West*, 542 F.2d 522, 524 (9th Cir. 1976).

21 <sup>7</sup> *Yourish v. Cal. Amplifier*, 191 F.3d 983, 992 (9th Cir. 1999) (explaining that considering less  
22 drastic alternatives *before* the party has disobeyed a court order does not satisfy this factor);  
23 *accord Pagtalunan v. Galaza*, 291 F.3d 639, 643 & n.4 (9th Cir. 2002) (explaining that “the  
persuasive force of” earlier Ninth Circuit cases that “implicitly accepted pursuit of less drastic  
alternatives prior to disobedience of the court's order as satisfying this element[.]” i.e., like the  
“initial granting of leave to amend coupled with the warning of dismissal for failure to  
comply[.]” have been “eroded” by *Yourish*).

<sup>8</sup> *Henderson*, 779 F.2d at 1424.

1 another deadline is not a meaningful alternative given these circumstances. So the fifth factor  
2 favors dismissal.

3 Having thoroughly weighed these dismissal factors, I find that they weigh in favor of  
4 dismissal. IT IS THEREFORE ORDERED that **THIS ACTION IS DISMISSED** without  
5 prejudice based on Steinbach's failure to pay the filing fee or seek to proceed *in forma pauperis*  
6 in compliance with the court's order. The Clerk of Court is directed to **ENTER JUDGMENT**  
7 accordingly and **CLOSE THIS CASE**. If Petitioner Matthew Steinbach wishes to pursue his  
8 claims, he must file a petition in a new case, and he must pay the fee for that action or file a  
9 complete application to proceed *in forma pauperis*.

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U.S. District Judge Jennifer A. Dorsey  
September 9, 2025  
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